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Chairman: Mrs. ESPINOSA (Mexico)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 105: REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (continued) (A/51/293, A/51/493, A/51/499, A/51/565)

1. Mr. BORDA (Colombia) said that Colombia had participated actively in the various debates in the United Nations on the problems of indigenous peoples - fundamental rights, environment, development, health and education - and was striving to implement the recommendations adopted after major international conferences.

2. Colombia, which was essentially a multi-ethnic nation, was particularly concerned about the situation of the minority black and indigenous peoples who, under the 1886 Constitution, had already been granted Colombian nationality, equality of rights and the enjoyment of protected areas. Representatives of three ethnic groups had participated in the formulation of the 1991 Constitution, which had reaffirmed the rights of those minorities and the principle of equality for all. That Constitution included clear provisions concerning collective land ownership, the management of natural resources, recognition of indigenous forms of government and administration, protection of the identity and cultural heritage of the indigenous peoples, the official status of the languages and dialects they used and the creation of special electoral districts ensuring their representation in Congress.

3. His Government had launched a programme to strengthen the capacities of the indigenous peoples of Colombia (1995-1998), the objectives of which were: to improve relations between the social, economic and cultural systems of the indigenous peoples and those of Colombian society; to promote the ethnic, individual and collective rights of those peoples; to coordinate the activities of the public authorities and non-governmental organizations which were seeking to promote the autonomous and sustainable development of the indigenous peoples; to facilitate the participation of those peoples in programmes which concerned them; and, lastly, to promote better knowledge of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Colombian nation.

4. It had been determined, in particular, that the education of the indigenous peoples should concentrate on the environment, take into account the forms of social organization and methods of production of those peoples, and respect their values. In the area of health, efforts had been made to harmonize traditional medicine and Western medicine. In Colombia, nearly 80 per cent of the indigenous people lived in protected territories with an area of 27 million hectares, where they had complete autonomy in the management of their affairs, the use of their language, the administration of justice and elections. They also participated in the evaluation of the impact of development projects on their territories and their cultures. Since 1994, part of Colombia's budget had been earmarked for the indigenous peoples.

5. An advisory committee had been established within his Government to better coordinate the activities carried out by the public authorities, non-governmental organizations and the traditional authorities of the indigenous

peoples so as to protect the rights of the latter. Lastly, the Comisión de derechos humanos de los pueblos indígenos (Commission on the human rights of the indigenous peoples), established in 1996, had the task of protecting those peoples through preventive action and the strengthening of institutions. It was also concerned with promoting and disseminating their rights.

6. Mr. LILLO (Chile) said that, long neglected, the indigenous peoples had been marginalized and excluded from development. He was gratified that the General Assembly had decided to devote a decade to the problem and that the international community was according increasing importance to it.

7. Much remained to be done, however. In that context, it was particularly useful that the Secretary-General had reviewed in his report (A/51/493) the existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes within the United Nations concerning indigenous people and the possibilities of establishing a permanent forum for indigenous peoples. It was clear from that report that, with the exception of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, whose mandate was limited, there was no body in the system which was specifically responsible for issues of concern to indigenous peoples, or bodies in which they participated fully or in which they could express their views and put forward their priorities. It was high time to take steps to fill that institutional void, in particular by implementing the recommendations to which the Secretary-General had referred in his report on the implementation of the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (A/51/499).

8. Chile, which fully supported the efforts made in that respect, welcomed the workshop which had been organized by Denmark and the Centre for Human Rights in 1995 in order to enter into constructive dialogue with the different actors concerned and consider the nature of the body to be established, its position within the United Nations, its mandate, the modalities of participation in its work and its funding.

9. Believing that the debate should be continued, Chile reiterated the offer it had made at the most recent session of the Commission on Human Rights to host a second workshop. It hoped that that proposal would be taken into account in the resolution to be adopted by the Committee at the current session.

10. Chile continued to believe that the declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples should be adopted rapidly and reaffirmed that it would participate actively in the work of the working group of the Commission on Human Rights. If the declaration was to be adopted before the end of the Decade, all the participants would have to show flexibility and tolerance. In particular, ways must be found, while respecting the established rules, to enable those most directly concerned to participate more in the formulation of the declaration, without which it would be meaningless.

11. Mr. KIMBERG (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that it was high time to take stock of what had been achieved so far in the context of the Decade. He commended the Secretary-General for submitting a report (A/51/493) which, for the first time, provided a thorough analysis of all the activities within the United Nations system relating to indigenous peoples.

12. The Decade must be used to achieve concrete results, adopt the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and establish a permanent forum for those peoples.

13. The open-ended working group established by the Commission on Human Rights to consider the draft declaration had just concluded its second session without making significant progress. The session had clearly highlighted that indigenous peoples were concerned that the process of negotiations might lead to a weakening of the draft declaration. The Nordic countries would take an active role in further work on the issue and remained firmly committed to ensuring the effective participation of the indigenous peoples. They therefore felt that it was essential to hold consultations prior to the next session of the working group in order to consider its agenda and working methods.

14. Within the United Nations, there was no mechanism to ensure the effective participation of representatives of the indigenous peoples in matters which were of direct concern to them. After the World Conference on Human Rights had drawn attention to the problem, the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights had adopted a number of resolutions with a view to remedying it. In addition, a workshop organized under the auspices of the United Nations in Copenhagen, in June 1995, had considered the possibilities of establishing a permanent forum.

15. The Secretary-General's report (A/51/493) was based on the results of the workshop. There were important differences in the activities of the various United Nations bodies, the scope of those activities and the level of involvement of representatives of indigenous people in their planning and implementation. Moreover, there was no mechanism to facilitate the exchange of information among Governments, United Nations organizations and indigenous people. Until such a mechanism was established, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations should play that role.

16. The above-mentioned report clearly indicated the need to broaden and intensify consultations aimed at the establishment of the proposed permanent forum. The Secretariat should transmit the conclusions of the report to Governments, representatives of indigenous people and relevant international organizations well in advance of the fifty-third session of the Commission on Human Rights. The Commission at its next session should continue its consideration of the possibility of creating a permanent forum based on the conclusions of the review and the comments received thereon.

17. It was clear, however, that the Commission would be able to embark on only a preliminary discussion of the implications of the review and that consultations should continue with the active participation of the representatives of indigenous people. The Nordic countries therefore reiterated their strong support for the proposal by Chile that a second workshop should be held on the creation of the said forum.

18. The Nordic countries also noted with satisfaction that the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People was now operational and that an advisory group comprised of representatives of

indigenous people and donors had been established. They remained convinced that donor confidence depended on the effectiveness and transparency with which the Fund was administered.

19. Ms. WILSON (New Zealand) welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the review of the existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes within the United Nations concerning indigenous people (A/51/493). The report contained a preliminary review of the activities undertaken within the framework of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, identified the obstacles to the achievement of the goals of the Decade and recommended solutions for overcoming the problems encountered. The report concluded that increasing interest was being shown by United Nations organizations in indigenous issues and that that interest had been translated into concrete programmes tailored to meet the needs of indigenous people.

20. It was by no means the sole responsibility of the United Nations system, however, to fulfil the goals of the Decade. Governments, non-governmental organizations and organizations of indigenous people also had key roles to play. With regard to the latter, the key objective of the Decade was to encourage indigenous people to participate directly in activities to mark the Decade. In that connection, her delegation welcomed the involvement of representatives of indigenous organizations in the annual sessions of the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly since New Zealand had worked hard for the adoption of a procedure to enable such organizations to participate in the Working Group.

21. As part of its activities to mark the Decade, New Zealand had established a committee comprised of representatives of various Maori organizations and had decided to proclaim 1995 the Year of the Maori Language. The Government of New Zealand intended to provide funding throughout the Decade for a number of major projects related to the language of the indigenous population.

22. In keeping with the principles enshrined in the nation's founding document, the Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand had settled claims made by various tribal groups. Additional claims were currently before the Waitangi Tribunal, which was the forum for the resolution of Maori grievances. The Government's aim was to restore to indigenous New Zealanders their economic base and cultural identity.

23. Her delegation shared the Secretary-General's conclusion that the results of the review of existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes within the United Nations concerning indigenous people were both encouraging and troubling. Troubling because there were few regularly scheduled United Nations meetings that focused on indigenous issues, and encouraging because of the increasing incidence of consultations within several United Nations bodies in which the views of indigenous people were sought.

24. In conclusion, her delegation wished to recall the theme of the Decade, which was to create a partnership in action. It was towards the realization of that goal that the cooperation of the international community must be aimed. New Zealand was committed to all initiatives taken within the framework of the

Decade which were aimed at improving the situation of indigenous people in all parts of the globe.

25. Mr. LANGMAN (Australia) said that his country strongly supported the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. It considered the Decade, together with the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the inter-sessional Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights to review the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, as major vehicles for the promotion of the rights and interests of indigenous people internationally. Australia, which was committed to working with the United Nations in that area, had taken a lead role in the drafting of resolutions on the Decade in the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights and would continue to take a close interest in the Decade. The Decade must be based on a true partnership which fostered new and equitable relationships based on mutual respect between States and their indigenous populations on the one hand and between the international community and those populations on the other.

26. At the domestic level, Australia hoped that the Decade would consolidate the process of increasing awareness among the wider community of the rights, concerns, traditional values and culture of aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) was the organization responsible for the coordination, planning and implementation of the Decade's activities in Australia. A process of national reconciliation was also in place aimed at fostering dialogue and understanding between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians and at addressing the economic and social problems faced by the former group. In addition to the inclusion of a National Week of Reconciliation in the domestic calendar, the reconciliation process included discussions within key sectors of the Australian community and the organization of an Australian reconciliation convention in May 1997 to be attended by over 1,000 people from all over the world. The aim of those initiatives was to mobilize support for indigenous issues throughout Australian society.

27. The Australian Government supported the adoption by the General Assembly during the Decade of a United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and had supported consideration of the proposal to establish a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations system. It would continue to help indigenous populations to take their rightful place in international institutions. It was time to bring the world's indigenous people out of the shadow of the oppression and marginalization of which they were victims.

28. Mr. ZOZULYA (Ukraine) said that his delegation was deeply convinced that the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous people and national minorities contributed not only to the stability of multi-ethnic societies, especially in the countries in transition, but also to national and international security. The existence of cooperation and a fruitful dialogue among the different ethnic, linguistic and religious groups in those societies was indispensable for the peaceful development of each country and for good-neighbourly relations among States. Cooperation among the Coordinator of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the relevant United Nations agencies, Governments and non-governmental organizations would

also make a substantial contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Decade, as would the mobilization of all the countries concerned with a view to the comprehensive implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade. It was therefore urgent to develop and strengthen international cooperation in such areas as human rights, education, public health and the preservation of the cultural identity of indigenous people.

29. Ukraine paid particular attention to the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights on the elaboration of a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. In order to complete its task successfully, the working group should seek to consolidate the spirit of constructive cooperation between States and non-governmental organizations. The declaration itself, in addition to providing for the comprehensive protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous people, should include provisions prohibiting any action designed to impair the territorial integrity or political unity of the sovereign and independent States in which those people lived. In that connection, his delegation cautioned the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities against any politicization of its work, particularly in studying the question of the peaceful settlement of situations involving indigenous people.

30. At the national level, Ukrainian legislation provided a solid basis for the development of all citizens, without distinction as to ethnic origin, sex or religious, linguistic or cultural characteristics. Equal attention was being paid to the renaissance and free development of the Ukrainian nation and to the promotion and protection of the spiritual and cultural heritage of other ethnic, linguistic and religious groups living in Ukraine. In that connection, an expert group headed by the Minister of Justice and composed of representatives of governmental agencies, non-governmental and indigenous organizations and scientists and academics had been set up to elaborate a national policy with regard to indigenous people and to contribute to the lawmaking process in that new area of national legislation.

31. Mr. MOREIRA GARCIA (Brazil) welcomed the recognition that indigenous communities constituted culturally differentiated societies which, far from threatening the national societies of the countries in which they lived, could be of benefit to modern society as a source of tolerance, mutual respect and respect for human rights.

32. If indigenous people were to be protected, one of the first steps must be to demarcate their lands. His Government had worked tirelessly to set aside almost 1 million square kilometres - more than a tenth of the national territory - for the 330,000 indigenous people living in Brazil, a process that had required the adoption of special legislation to ensure its constitutionality. In addition to the demarcation of indigenous lands, the Government had proposed a national action plan for human rights which included specific measures on behalf of indigenous people: in the health area, the plan proposed a health care model based on a combination of traditional and modern medicine, community involvement and the training of indigenous health technicians; in education, it envisaged specific and differentiated schooling which respected the social and cultural values of each group; and, lastly, it

proposed the dissemination of information on indigenous rights through the media and schools.

33. At the international level, Brazil was proud to have taken the lead in proposing in the World Health Organization (WHO) the elaboration of a plan of action for international cooperation in the field of the health care of indigenous people. Similar practical initiatives should be taken in other international agencies with a view to achieving the objectives of the Decade. Since full implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade would depend on the allocation of human and financial resources, Brazil encouraged the Coordinator of the International Decade to continue his efforts to ensure the involvement of United Nations bodies in those activities. Evaluations of activities under the Decade would be important and the Working Group on Indigenous Populations must therefore receive information from Governments on the implementation of the goals of the Decade in their countries. The Economic and Social Council would be conducting mid-term and end-term reviews of the Decade and his delegation expected the Commission on Human Rights to play a significant role in the follow-up to activities throughout the Decade.

34. In view of the meaningful work being done by the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, Brazil had strong doubts about the establishment of a new, permanent forum for indigenous people. It seemed more logical to try to improve the efficiency of existing mechanisms. In any case, the report of the Secretary-General on existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes within the United Nations concerning indigenous people (A/51/493) should be studied carefully before taking any decision on the issue.

35. Given the array of divergent views which had emerged at its second session, the open-ended inter-sessional working group to elaborate a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples must approach its mandate constructively and in a spirit of compromise in order to arrive at a text that was both universally acceptable and politically realistic. If it was to become an international instrument adopted under the aegis of the United Nations, the declaration must not allow any exceptions to the principle of the universality of human rights, on the pretext of distinctive historical or legal characteristics.

36. In conclusion, Brazil attached great importance to international cooperation as a means of assisting countries in their efforts to promote sustainable development for indigenous people.

37. Mrs. WAHBI (Sudan) said that her country, recognizing the need to ensure respect for human rights without discrimination, had welcomed the initiative taken by the international community in proclaiming an International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and adopting the corresponding programme of activities. The Sudan particularly appreciated the efforts of the working group of the Commission on Human Rights responsible for elaborating a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. It hoped that those efforts would result in the drafting of a strong text that recognized fully the right of indigenous people to preserve their customs and way of life. Before that could be done, however, a definition of the term "indigenous people" must

be arrived at that was acceptable to all parties, namely, governments and the organizations concerned.

38. As far as her country was concerned, there was no difference between the rights of indigenous people and human rights in general. The question of the rights of indigenous peoples posed a problem for some States, however, because they feared that the recognition of such rights might undermine their sovereignty and territorial integrity. It was the role of the United Nations to elaborate an instrument that would eliminate such fears and reconcile the rights of the peoples concerned and with respect for State boundaries. In the view of her delegation, the right to self-determination meant, for such peoples, the right to liberate themselves from colonialism and to lead their everyday lives in accordance with their own traditions. It did not mean the right to an independent State.

39. The contributions received by the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations from governmental and non-governmental sources were recorded in paragraphs 6 and 7 of document A/51/565. No mention was made, however, of the indigenous organizations that had benefited from assistance from the Fund. The Sudan would like more precise information on the criteria used to select those beneficiaries.

40. Her delegation was prepared to participate in the efforts being made to give final form to the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and to promote dialogue and understanding between Governments and organizations representing such peoples.

41. Mr. CARRANZA CIFUENTES (Guatemala) said that his delegation wished to stress the importance of the Programme of Activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. The issues on which the Programme focused, including human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education, merited his country's attention given its awareness of the discrimination to which the indigenous peoples of Guatemala had long been subjected.

42. The activities undertaken by his Government for the benefit of those peoples had primarily been in the social domain. In 1994 the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Guatemalan Communities (FODIGUA) had been established to mobilize resources for Mayan communities. Its budget of 5 million dollars in 1995 had been increased to 11.5 million dollars in 1996, and there had been more than 57,000 beneficiaries. The Social Investment Fund (FIS) had financed the establishment of savings and credit institutions almost all of whose members were indigenous women. The plan of action implemented by his country in the framework of the Decade placed its major emphasis on education as a means of solving the problems encountered by indigenous peoples and protecting their basic rights. Bilingual education, in particular, had the goal of eliminating the cultural and social stereotypes that gave rise to discrimination and of protecting the cultural and linguistic diversity of the peoples concerned. Education was also a means of achieving the objective the country was currently pursuing, namely the establishment of a firm and lasting peace. UNESCO had played a very important role in that regard, particularly at the subregional level, with the establishment of a Mayan unit that coordinated various projects

for indigenous peoples in the Mayan region and promoted a culture of peace in the country, principally by addressing itself to cultural development, education, sustainable development and communication.

43. UNESCO had organized a congress on Mayan education that had provided an opportunity to reaffirm all aspects of the Mayan cultural heritage and had contributed to the elaboration of the Agreement on identity and rights of indigenous peoples of 31 March 1995. The Agreement was destined to modify radically the lives of indigenous peoples in Guatemala.

44. Owing to the tenacity of their own organizations and the openness of certain Guatemalan political parties, the Mayan people had considerably increased its participation in the civic and political life of the country, as was indicated by the fact that more than 100 of the century's 300 or more municipalities had indigenous mayors. In order to ease relations between indigenous communities and the judicial authorities, his Government had established an indigenous affairs secretariat to address the situation of ethnic groups vis-à-vis the law and their relations with the State.

45. In connection with the international aspect of the question, his delegation was convinced that it was necessary to establish a permanent forum for indigenous peoples in order to monitor compliance with international instruments relating to such peoples. It was essential to create mechanisms to ensure the survival of indigenous peoples, particularly in a world that was increasingly losing sight of the need to preserve values that differed from those of modern societies.

46. His delegation called the attention of States to the need to ratify the International Labour Organization Convention No. 169, concerning indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries. Scarcely 10 countries, one of them his own, had thus far ratified the Convention.

47. Mr. TAN (Malaysia) said that the complexity and diversity of the problems encountered by indigenous peoples were such that it was impossible to find one universal solution. It was the responsibility of governments to accord full rights to those peoples and that of the international community to respect the initiatives taken for them by governments to the extent that such initiatives brought reconciliation and national unity.

48. His country welcomed the offer of the Chilean Government to host the second workshop on the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations system. It nevertheless noted that the first workshop had not had the results expected, despite the number of meetings it had held and the resources allocated to it. The second workshop should therefore conduct its work in accordance with a specific agenda, should have clear objectives, should not duplicate the work already done and should be devoted to planning and implementing tangible projects of benefit to indigenous people. The establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people would not replace the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and should not undermine its work. There was no reason both entities should not coexist as long as their respective mandates were clearly defined.

49. Indigenous communities, which were among the poorest in the world, were in need of programmes focusing on basic social amenities, education, training, health and employment opportunities. Malaysia, whose Constitution guaranteed all rights and privileges to indigenous peoples just as it did to all citizens, particularly with regard to culture, traditions, religion and language, was resolved to involve indigenous peoples in the country's development efforts. Their contribution was valuable, especially in the environmental field, and measures had been taken to encourage their participation in resource management, conservation and sustainable development.

50. Mr. AINSO (Estonia) pointed out that while the existing guarantees of individual human rights were necessary, they were not sufficient to assure the survival of indigenous people. That explained why countries with long democratic traditions were belatedly recognizing the need to change their attitudes to such people. In countries where respect for human rights did not exist, indigenous people could not even voice their grievances.

51. Steps must be taken to rectify that situation. A first step would be to adopt a declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, taking care to involve those peoples in the drafting of such a declaration, since it would affect their lives and, in some instances, even guarantee their survival. It was also important to establish a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations system which would ensure that the recommendations and programmes of action formulated by United Nations bodies were put into effect. He expressed appreciation of the Government of Chile for offering to host the second workshop on the creation of such a permanent forum. The Secretary-General's report on the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People stated that indigenous people were largely absent from the meetings of the United Nations system, in part because of the rules governing participation but also because of a lack of resources or information. Consideration must therefore be given to improving the mechanisms for keeping indigenous people informed of the activities undertaken on their behalf by United Nations bodies and to increasing their participation in those bodies. Paternalism had no place in the United Nations.

52. There had long been great interest in his country in the culture of the indigenous people living in its territory. The creation of the Estonian Finno-Ugria Foundation dated back to the 1920s. The Foundation maintained a close working relationship with associations representing other indigenous peoples and organized annual events with a view to promoting contacts among them.

53. Welcoming the progress made since the proclamation of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, his delegation pledged to work with all the parties concerned, especially indigenous people, to implement the Decade's programme of activities in its entirety.

54. Mrs. LIMJUCO (Philippines) drew the Committee's attention to the text of the Manila Declaration, which had been distributed as document A/51/293. That Declaration, which had been adopted at the closing of the Global Indigenous and Youth Cultural Olympics/Summit for Peace and Sustainable Development, held at Manila in March 1996, contained six sections on indigenous people, namely

cultural identity and the arts; land and culture; human rights and responsibilities; education and health; participation; and peace and sustainable development. In presenting that text, her delegation hoped to contribute to the elaboration of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and to promote a dialogue among Governments, international organizations and the peoples concerned.

AGENDA ITEM 105: REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS (continued) (A/C.3/51/L.13 and 14)

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.13 on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

55. Mr. TAMA (Cameroon) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of African States.

56. Some corrections must be made to the text. In paragraph 3, the word "their" before the words "long-term socio-economic development" should be deleted. In paragraph 5, the word "its" in the expression "expressing its concern" should also be deleted. At the end of the same paragraph, the word "the" should be inserted before the words "well-being of refugees".

57. In paragraph 8, the word ", intergovernmental" should be inserted before "and non-governmental". In the fifth line of the same paragraph, the word "their" before the word "efforts" should be deleted. In the second line of paragraph 10, the word "their" should be deleted before "protection". In paragraph 11, the word ", intergovernmental" should be inserted before "and non-governmental".

58. In paragraph 12, the words "solidarity and" should be added after "spirit of". At the end of paragraph 18, the words "substantially increased" should be inserted before "refugee needs". At the end of paragraph 19, the words "in Africa" should be inserted after "asylum countries". Finally, at the end of paragraph 23, the preposition "of" before "1997" should be replaced by "in".

59. The resolution was of course urgent. It appealed to the international community to find more effective ways of reducing the number of refugees in Africa. Those numbers were reaching such proportions that the situation was virtually out of control, as the humanitarian crisis currently raging in eastern Zaire showed. His delegation hoped that the international community would heed that appeal and that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in particular, which was called upon to intensify its protection activities and improve the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance in that region of the world, would implement the provisions of the draft resolution fully.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.14 on the enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

60. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take action on the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

61. It was so decided.

62. Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.14, as orally revised, was adopted.

63. Mrs. WADE (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position following the adoption of the draft resolution, said that her delegation, which attached great importance to strengthening the management of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, viewed with satisfaction the participation of new members in the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It therefore welcomed the adoption of resolution A/C.3/51/L.14 adding South Africa and Poland to the Executive Committee. Her delegation felt, however, that the admission of new members should meet certain criteria. In particular, States wishing to become members of the Executive Committee should at least have ratified the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and should also make voluntary contributions to the Programme of the High Commissioner for Refugees or, failing that, receive refugees in their territory.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.